

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. -18. (Cancelled)

19. (Currently Amended) A method of mapping the electrical characteristics of the left atrium of the heart comprising:

providing a magnetically navigable electrode catheter comprising a sleeve having a proximal end and a distal end, an extension member having a proximal end and a distal end, the extension member being slidably mounted in the sleeve so that the distal end portion telescopes from the distal end of the sleeve, the distal end portion of the extension member being relatively more flexible than the distal end of the sleeve;

providing at least one electrode on the distal end of the extension member; and at least one magnet on the distal end of portion of the extension member, wherein the distal end portion of the extension member containing the at least one magnet is relatively rigid and the portion of the extension member just proximal to the at least one magnet is flexible;

introducing the distal end of the magnetically navigable electrode catheter into left atrium;

moving the electrode into contact with a selected point on the surface of the left atrium by applying an external magnetic field, such that the catheter bends at a point proximal to the distal end portion having the at least one magnet, and selectively telescoping extension member relative to the sleeve to bring the electrode on the distal end of the extension member into contact with the specific point on the surface of the left atrium;

measuring the electrical characteristics of the left atrium between the electrodes.

20. (Original) The method according to claim 19 wherein the magnetically navigable electrode catheter further comprises a sheath having a proximal end and a distal end, the sleeve being slidably mounted in the sheath so that the distal end portion of the sleeve telescopes from the distal end of the sheath, and wherein the step of

moving the electrode into contact with a selected point on the surface of the left atrium includes selectively telescoping the sleeve relative to the sheath.

21. - 25. (Cancelled)

26. (Original) The method according to claim 19 wherein the extension member has a lumen extending at least partly therethrough, the method comprising inserting a stylette into the lumen in the extension member to stiffen the extension member.

27. (Original) The method according to claim 19 wherein the extension member has a lumen extending at least partly therethrough, the method comprising inserting a pre-shaped stylette into the lumen in the extension member to shape the extension member to facilitate navigation of the extension member.

28. (Original) The method according to claim 19 wherein the extension member has a lumen extending at least partly therethrough, the method comprising inserting a stylette into the lumen in the extension member and pushing the stylette to push the extension member.

29. (Currently Amended) [[The method according to claim 21]] A method of therapeutically ablating tissue in the left atrium of the heart comprising:

providing a magnetically navigable electrode catheter comprising a sleeve having a proximal end and a distal end, an extension member having a proximal end and a distal end, the extension member being slidably mounted in the sleeve so that the distal end portion telescopes from the distal end of the sleeve, the distal end portion of the extension member being relatively more flexible than the distal end of the sleeve;

providing at least one electrode on the distal end of the extension member; and at least one magnet on the distal end portion of the extension member;

introducing the distal end of the magnetically navigable electrode catheter into left atrium;

moving the electrode into contact with a selected point on the surface of the left atrium by applying an external magnetic field and selectively telescoping extension member relative to the sleeve to bring the electrode on the distal end of the extension member into contact with the specific point on the surface of the left atrium;
and

applying an RF signal to the tissue in contact with the electrode to ablate the tissue, wherein the extension member has a lumen extending at least partly therethrough, the method comprising inserting a stylette into the lumen in the extension member to stiffen the extension member.

30. (Currently Amended) [[The method according to claim 21]] A method of therapeutically ablating tissue in the left atrium of the heart comprising:

providing a magnetically navigable electrode catheter comprising a sleeve having a proximal end and a distal end, an extension member having a proximal end and a distal end, the extension member being slidably mounted in the sleeve so that the distal end portion telescopes from the distal end of the sleeve, the distal end portion of the extension member being relatively more flexible than the distal end of the sleeve;

providing at least one electrode on the distal end of the extension member; and at least one magnet on the distal end portion of the extension member;

introducing the distal end of the magnetically navigable electrode catheter into left atrium;

moving the electrode into contact with a selected point on the surface of the left atrium by applying an external magnetic field and selectively telescoping extension member relative to the sleeve to bring the electrode on the distal end of the extension member into contact with the specific point on the surface of the left atrium; and

applying an RF signal to the tissue in contact with the electrode to ablate the tissue, wherein the extension member has a lumen extending at least partly therethrough, the method comprising inserting a pre-shaped stylette into the lumen in the extension member to shape the extension member to facilitate navigation of the extension member.

31. (Currently Amended) [[The method according to claim 21]] A method of therapeutically ablating tissue in the left atrium of the heart comprising:

providing a magnetically navigable electrode catheter comprising a sleeve having a proximal end and a distal end, an extension member having a proximal end and a distal end, the extension member being slidably mounted in the sleeve so that the distal end portion telescopes from the distal end of the sleeve, the distal end portion of the extension member being relatively more flexible than the distal end of the sleeve;

providing at least one electrode on the distal end of the extension member; and at least one magnet on the distal end portion of the extension member;
introducing the distal end of the magnetically navigable electrode catheter into left atrium;

moving the electrode into contact with a selected point on the surface of the left atrium by applying an external magnetic field and selectively telescoping extension member relative to the sleeve to bring the electrode on the distal end of the extension member into contact with the specific point on the surface of the left atrium;
and

applying an RF signal to the tissue in contact with the electrode to ablate the tissue, wherein the extension member has a lumen extending at least partly therethrough, the method comprising inserting a stylette into the lumen in the extension member and pushing the stylette to push the extension member.

32. - 38. (Cancelled)